# ARRAY

Welcome to our very first issue of Array! We've separated the content into two sections. The first half presents the impressive work of 50 artists and photographers. Take some time to absorb the images. When you're ready, delve into the second half which features interviews with nearly all of the contributors.

The benefit of this being a digital zine, rather than a printed book, means you can click on the links! Find someone you've never heard of before? Click away, explore more of their work, give them a follow, and don't forget to leave them a friendly comment.

If you're interested in submitting to the next issue of Array, head over here.

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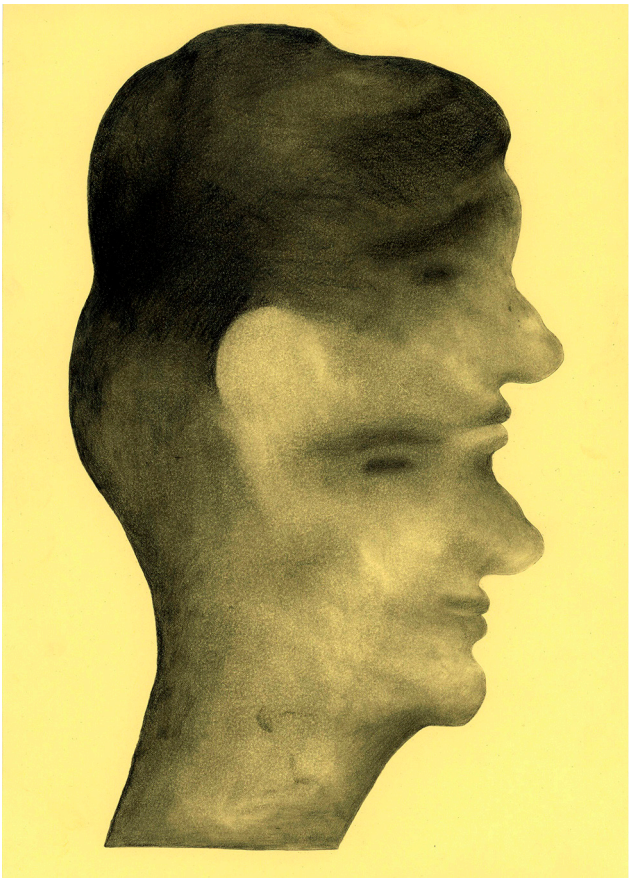

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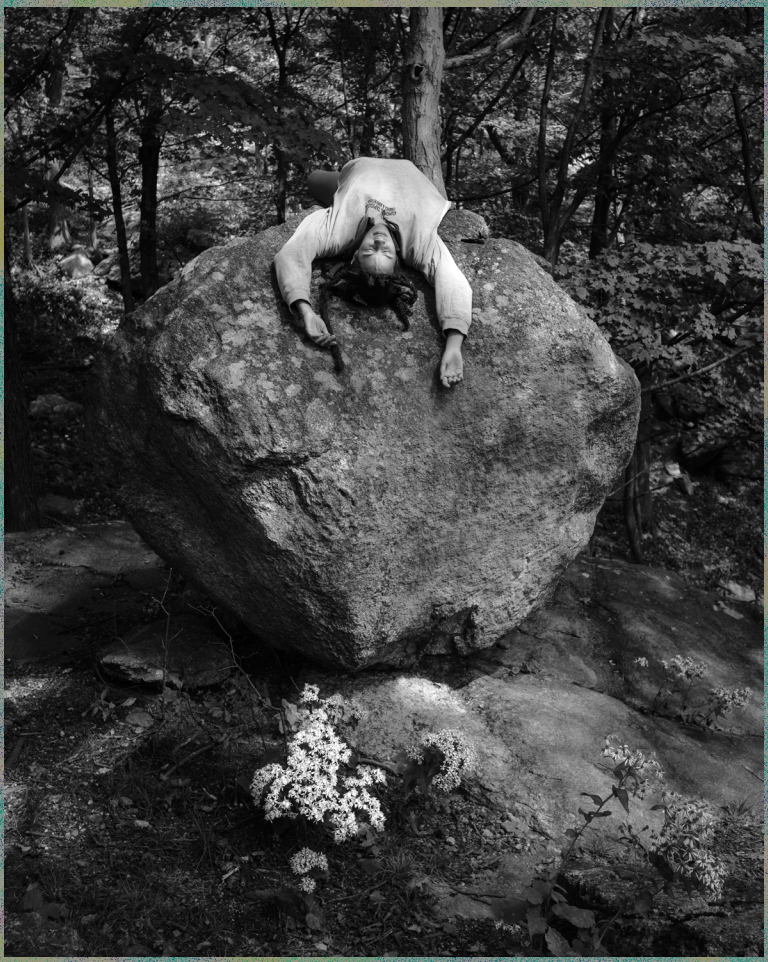

Javier E. Piñero

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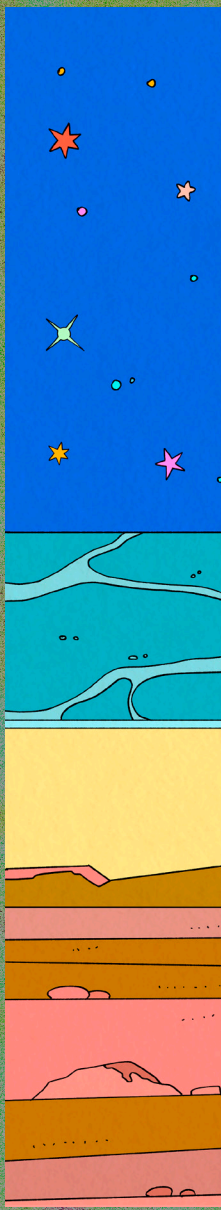

Sasha Krautman

Peter Gabriel Gehrman

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Wenjing Yang

Wenqing Zhai

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Yadi Liu

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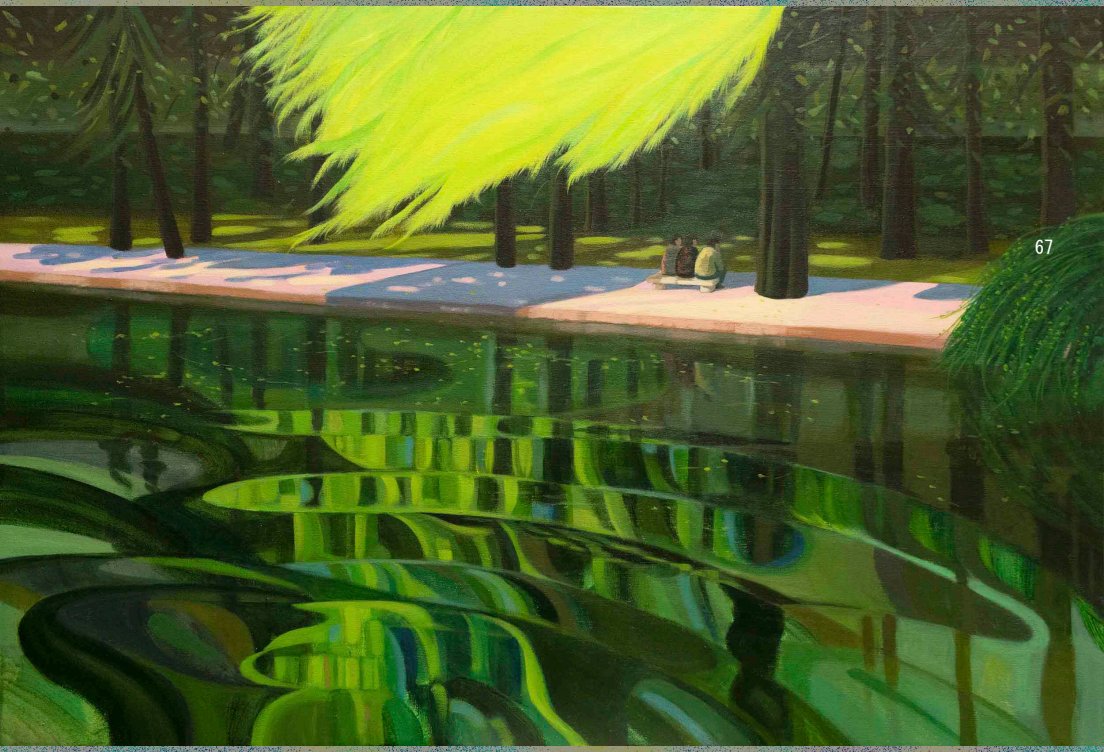



Zhongwen Hu

Claire Cansick

# Adèle Aproh

***Describe your aesthetic as an artist.***

My work is the source of a narrative dynamic attached to pop culture, comics and surrealism. With coloured pencils, I tend to stage cartoon-like characters in surrealistic scenes tinged with humour and absurdity.

***How has your work evolved over the years?***

This image was part of a series created during a test shoot with this incredible talent, Chris Ndayi. I love exploring abstraction and perception within my work through lighting and physical objects. Having a magnifying barrier in front of my subject is something that I feel is relatable to our cultural climate at the moment. I come from a fine art background of painting and printmaking that informs my approach to making an image.

***Are there any recurring themes or messages in your work?***

Childhood, mise en abyme, self-representation.

***Who are some other artists inspiring you these days?***

I recently purchased *Little Nemo in Slumberland* by Winsor McCay. I only knew him by name and discovered his work more deeply with this reading. The richness and virtuosity of his drawings and stories are a real source of inspiration.

***How do you balance the desire to create images purely for yourself with the pressure to keep or gain a following?***

I'm not really thinking about gaining followers or growing my social media when I draw. Of course, promoting my work is an important part of the job and a real opportunity to reach an audience I would never have had otherwise, so I share my artworks as frequently as I can but my 'communication strategy' stops there.

***What's the most interesting thing you watched, read, or listened to recently?***

*Mars Express* (French Sci-Fi animation).



instagram.com/aprohdite

# Agnieszka Nienartowicz

*How has your work evolved over the years?*

In terms of content, I am interested in religion and humanity, exploring how religion impacts individuals. From a formal perspective, my works are figurative, drawing heavily from the Caravaggio style, and this remains consistent. The evolution in my art, I feel, manifests primarily through increasing artistic maturity and a deeper understanding of my subjects, gaining better insight into myself and the world. Certain themes I began exploring earlier are now being developed further. I am gaining new perspectives, delving deeper into certain topics, and clearing away areas that are less essential. I would describe my artistic process as a journey through a labyrinth, where each captivating theme becomes a pretext for further exploration. The evolution in my art is about discovering deeper layers of meaning.

*What's the most interesting thing you watched, read, or listened to recently?*

Lately, I've been deeply interested in the philosophy of Carl Jung. Currently, I'm reading "Man and His Symbols" and "The Symbolic Life."

I'm particularly intrigued by his approach to symbols, archetypes, and their connection to the human psyche. Symbols and archetypes are integral parts of our psyche, and understanding them can lead to a deeper self-awareness. According to Jung, symbols are universal forms of expression that transcend different cultures and societies. They constitute a kind of symbolic language that goes beyond the limitations of words. It's fascinating how symbols can convey profound aspects of the psyche that are often challenging to capture using traditional language.

This significance becomes especially apparent in art, particularly in painting. Jung's idea that artistic creation can be a form of expressing unconscious aspects of the psyche resonates strongly with me. Working with symbols and archetypes in painting allows me to explore the profound layers of my psyche and discover hidden meanings. It's like a journey into my own inner world, where the paintings become a meeting place with myself on a symbolic level. Studying Jung's philosophy helps me gain insights into myself and, consequently, into my own artistic pursuits.



instagram.com/agnieszka.nienartowicz

# Amy Ordoveza

***How has your work evolved over the years?***

When I first started creating cut-paper elements for still life paintings, I presented them isolated on a tabletop, which reminded me of an altar or a stage, in front of a black background. I wanted the paintings to be just about those objects and the places and memories that they represented for me.

After a while I began creating trompe l'oeil paintings in a shallow space. I became especially interested in composing with false windows that don't allow a viewer to see out. In my most recent paintings I've started bringing the tabletop elements together with trompe l'oeil elements and also including some real objects alongside the paper-cuts. I'm excited about the new possibilities that this opens up.

For a while I took a lot of my own photo-references to work from because I wanted them to be illuminated with real natural light, which is always changing, but recently I've started simulating natural light with lamps so that I can work directly from life. I find it's much easier to see subtle changes in value working from life.

***How do you balance the desire to create images purely for yourself with the pressure to keep or gain a following?***

I can't say that I've balanced it, since I don't really have a large following. My paintings are quite detailed, so they take some time to complete, which makes it difficult to post frequently and keep up engagement. If I knew how to paint crowd-pleasers, I might be tempted to do so. As it is, I paint the ideas that are interesting to me, and sometimes they resonate with other people as well. It's wonderful when that happens.

***What is one thing you want to accomplish this next year?***

I'm going to have work in three group shows with *33 Contemporary* this year, so I would say that my goal for 2024 is to create at least one strong new painting for each of those shows. I recently bought a three-panel tabletop mirror, so I'm looking forward to composing with reflections for my next painting.



instagram.com/amy_ordoveza

# Austn Fischer

*Describe your aesthetic as an artist.*

A way to examine the human subconscious.

*How has your photography evolved over the years?*

Initially, I was fixated on everything being spotless and flawless. Now, rather than obsessing over perfection, my focus has shifted towards capturing images that provoke thoughts and emotions. I have a newfound freedom in this approach, embracing the beauty in imperfections and aiming to create visuals that resonate and stir something within those who view them.

*What's the most interesting thing you watched, read, or listened to recently?*

I just read *Swimming in the Dark*, one of the best books I've read in a long time. I found it relatable and balanced erotisicm with emotion in a complex way. I'm currently reading *Just Kids*, Patti Smith's memoir about her relationship with Robert Mapplethrope. I have been listening to Talking Heads, JPEGMAFIA, and Greentea Peng.

*Who are some other photographers inspiring you these days?*

I draw inspiration from a diverse spectrum of artistic expressions. Among the photographers who captivate me are Silvana Trevale, Robert Mapplethorpe, Michael Bailey-Gates, Irving Penn, and Claude Cahun. Beyond photography, I am deeply intrigued by the works of artists such as Dylan Bardoe, Alexey Mashkov, and Douglas Miller. My photographic practice is significantly shaped by the theories of Judith Butler and the broader discourse of queer theories and narratives.



*What is one thing you hope to accomplish in your lifetime?*

A dream of mine is to photograph the Academy Award Best Actors for *W Mag*. That is my dream project to work on.

instagram.com/austnfischer

# Brian DePauli

*Describe your aesthetic as an artist.*

Realism.

*How has your work evolved over the years?*

My work has evolved to be focused mainly on painting. And my paintings have become more detailed and realistic over the years.

*Are there any recurring themes or messages in your work?*

Themes of leisure and its role in society are the main message in my work.

*How do you balance the desire to create images purely for yourself with the pressure to keep or gain a following?*

I just try to make the most visually impressive paintings I can and hope that the audience appreciates them.

*Who are some other artists inspiring you these days?*

Marc Dennis and Daniel Fleur, I like the aesthetic and humor in their works.

*What is one thing you want to accomplish this next year?*

Have an exhibition at a commercial gallery.

*What is one thing you hope to accomplish in your lifetime?*

Solo Museum Show!!!



instagram.com/briandepauli

# Briggs Ogloff

*Complete this sentence: For me, photography is...*

An opportunity to have fun and facilitate positive, meaningful experiences for everyone involved. I think photography is a tool and activity to connect with people. Of course, I love making images, but I really cherish the memories and friends I've made more than anything. I feel very lucky.

*What is your eye drawn to lately?*

I don't know if it comes across but I'm always really struck by saturated things. I think my personal taste lately is quite loud and bright, I'd like to think some of that comes out in my work.

*Who are some other photographers inspiring you?*

Ryan McGinley's 2017 shoot with Brad Pitt for *GQ* got me into photography and remains a massive influence. Colour, emotion, landscape.

Tyler Mitchell's work stuns me with it's composition and depth of storytelling.

*Share some advice someone gave you that you've found to be true.*

Baby steps. Kenta Goto told me to allot little bits of time to all of the things I want to do. That helped me a ton at the time and it still comes to mind when I feel anxious with multiple ideas.

*What is the most interesting thing you read recently?*

Maggie Nelson's *Bluets* over and over. I love rudimentary concepts and ideas, something as simple as the relationship we have with something like a colour can be made profound if you're paying attention.

*What is one thing you want to accomplish this next year?*

Another book. A show. I really want to make films that carry the DNA of my photography!

*What is one thing you hope to accomplish in your lifetime?*

Happiness, learn how to play piano, and a feature film by 70.

instagram.com/briggsogloff

# Camille Jacquelot

*How has your work evolved over the years?*

My artistic work is rather recent. I love history and I began to be interested in prehistoric drawings, from which was born a series of portraits, silhouettes, which I created with charcoal on rocks. I now put this on paper by questioning humans and their diversity.

*Are there any recurring themes or messages in your work?*

I work as an illustrator for a French magazine on ecological and social issues. My personal work is inspired by this reality, I represent humans, animals... Except that these are not entirely representative of reality, and come to question this reality. What is reality?

*What is the most interesting thing you've read or seen recently?*

A book: *Lady Sapiens*, which questions the place of women in prehistory and where preconceived ideas and prejudices are deconstructed. A television series: *The Curse* (USA). I liked the personality of the characters, the humor and the violence, a vision of contemporary America.

*Who are some other artists inspiring you these days?*

I like Jockum Nordström, his collages, William Heath Robinson, Alain Le Saux, and many others. I try not to look at too many things so as not to be too influenced, apart from nature and prehistoric drawings.

*What is one thing you want to accomplish this next year?*

I have a children's book project (all audiences in reality) and I would like it to be published.

*What is one thing you hope to accomplish in your lifetime?*

I live more day by day, I hope to continue the walk for a long time.



instagram.com/j.a.c.q.u.e.l.o.t

# Ceninye Harris

***How has your photography evolved over the years?***

I started taking photographs in a predominantly white space. This meant that all my work, regardless of the subject matter, was a political protest. I could not make any art without them being classified as "Black Art." It took me so long to realize that the preconceptions of strangers do not define me or my art. Though, in some ways, my work still protests, I am more focused on building community with the people around me than changing the minds of others who refuse to see us.

***Who are some other photographers inspiring you these days?***

Pelumi Sokunbi is one of my biggest inspirations right now. His work, romantic at first glance, chases intimacy through composition. I am inspired by how he continues to push his image-making and make ideas I can only speak about tangible.

***Share some advice someone gave you that you've found to be true.***

Recently, my godparents told me to pace myself.

Though I'm only 21 years old, I sometimes feel like I'm falling behind or not doing enough. I'm so obsessed with photography and work and I frequently feel defeated that I'm not at the place I want to be. They reminded me that I'm still young and have so much time to accomplish all I want to. Nothing happens overnight, and I am trying to remember that.

***What is the most interesting thing you've read or seen recently?***

Hayao Miyazaki's *The Boy and the Heron* is one of the most beautiful things I've seen recently. Everyone should go watch.

***What is one thing you hope to accomplish in your lifetime?***

I hope to open a gallery in my hometown in Liberia. There are so few, if any, art centers in Liberia due to the poverty – I want to change that. All my work is inspired by memories I made there as a child, and I hope to pay homage to that.



instagram.com/ceninye

# Claire Cansick

***How has your work evolved over the years?***

I have taught myself to paint, having been a printmaker at art school obsessed with drawing. A delve into screen printing awakened a deep interest in colour, then came painting. My colour choices are integral to the atmosphere of my work and they've evolved over time to a key four colours which mix perfectly with one another. Only occasionally do I add what I call a guest colour. As a messy palette painter the endless mixes of these four colours fascinates me, when it doesn't any more, I'll explore others. My painting has become more and more about the paint on the surface; I start with an idea or one of my photos but they quickly succumb to what is happening on the surface and I allow it to dictate. It took a while for me to release control like this, a few years of painting to realise the way to paint something more soulful is to let instinct take over.

***Are there any recurring themes or messages in your work?***

Respect nature, be nature, love nature. We can't survive without it. Put your phone down and go out and touch the grass, smell the sea, wonder at the sky. Let go and experience it. It is a lot to translate into paint but I'm giving it a go.

***What's the most interesting thing you watched, read, or listened to recently?***

I recently listened to an audiobook of *The Living Mountain* by Nan Shepherd, read by Tilda Swinton. Her deep love, poetic vision and knowledge of the Cairngorms is how I feel about the sea. There is more than the visual, it can absorb you if you let it, you can transcend thoughts and feel part of the grand story of the natural world.

***Share some advice someone gave you that you've found to be true.***

Paint what you want, when you want and how you want. Any instruction which contains the word 'should' immediately throw away, screw it up like a scrap of paper and chuck it over your shoulder.

***What is one thing you hope to accomplish in your lifetime?***

I'd like to be acclaimed by some of my painting peers. I like being in that gang.

instagram.com/clairecansick

# Diane Roussille

*Are there any recurring themes or messages in your work?*

The main theme I try to work on is the sensation of reality, the feeling of a presence behind things. I try to be in the middle of traditonal and digital techniques because it is a way to show this line between material and immaterial.

*What's the most interesting thing you watched, read, or listened to recently?*

Recently I discovered Ari Aster's movies. *Hereditary* is so scary and visually stunning, as well as *Midsommar*.

*How do you balance the desire to create images purely for yourself with the pressure to keep or gain a following?*

I think those are linked, if you create images you love and feel that your work is expressing what you feel inside, people will be touched by it. I think it is better to slowly build your visual universe, and let it have its own life.

*Who are some other artists inspiring you these days?*

I am fascinated with the work of Angela Dalinger, her paintings mostly. I love this naive and cynical world she created. I also admire the work of Yann Kebbi, he does amazing drawings where you feel you can see from multiple points of views and it has so much movement.

*What is one thing you want to accomplish this next year?*

I am working on a horror graphic novel that I want to finish next year, I am super excited about this project!

*What is one thing you hope to accomplish in your lifetime?*

I would love to make an animated movie, write stories and work with passionate people.



instagram.com/pomm_z

# Don Brodie

*Complete this sentence: For me, photography is...*

A dialect within the visual language.

*How has your photography evolved over the years?*

Every year, I make a conscious effort to enhance my mindfulness information included within my photographic frame. This deliberate approach has infused my photographs with a deeper, more personal essence. While they may not explicitly unveil my specific intentions behind each frame, collectively, my pictures undeniably exude a distinctive sense of "me."

*Can you share the most unusual or unexpected thing that has happened to you while shooting photos?*

One of my most recent and distinctive projects unfolded amidst the peak of the Canadian wildfire smoke engulfing New York City. In this project, our subjects were deliberately directed to serve as integral architectural elements, inviting viewers into the immediate reality of today's environmental challenges. Despite the unfortunate circumstances of smoke-laden skies, the visuals heightened the narrative, imbuing it with a profound sense of resilience and a visceral connection to the prevailing consciousness of the time and beyond. As I reflect on the resulting photographs, I am grateful for the opportunity to have captured and shared moments that encapsulate a significant essence of the prevailing time.

*Who or what is inspiring you these days?*

I have been drawn back to traditional photography – street, one light in the studio. It doesn't really inform the photographs I am currently making, however, within the current media driven world, it's nice to slow everything down and admire the simplicity of photography.

*Share some advice someone gave you that you've found to be true.*

Learn as much as you can and forget it right away (Do, but don't).



instagram.com/dbp_

# Elijah Jones

*Complete this sentence: For me, photography is...*

How I see the world. Photography has opened up many doors, avenues, and relationships.

*How would you describe your aesthetic? What is your eye drawn to lately?*

I feel that shooting black and white creates a certain mood in my story. I've been drawn to things that move me on a personal level. This includes the one's I'm close with.

*Who are some other photographers inspiring you these days?*

My latest photography inspirations are Andre Wagner, Bryan Birks, and Bryan Schutmaat. These photographers tells their stories with full authenticity, usually showing the behind the scenes and background inspiration as well.

*What is the most interesting thing you've seen or read recently?*

*Good Goddamn* by Bryan Schutmaat. The theme of him documenting his friend's last days before his prison sentence resonated with me more than any other photo book yet. This inspired a couple of my ongoing projects as well.

*Share some advice someone gave you that you've found to be true.*

An old friend of mine told me to treat it as an art, rather than a profession. Also, to stay true to your vision.

*What is one thing you want to accomplish this next year?*

Making more work — read more, see more, listen more.

*What is one thing you hope to accomplish in your lifetime?*

To have my work on a billboard.

# Emma Hapner

*How has your work evolved over the years?*

Over the past few years, I've learned to embrace my love of the color pink and let go of a lot of fear I used to have, especially when I was a student. I used to worry a lot about being taken seriously, but once I let go of that and really leaned into the things I love painting, I started to gain some confidence. I also started focusing more and more on self-portraiture. Using my own image to tell a story about my experiences also helped me to build my confidence as an artist.



*What's the most interesting thing you watched, read, or listened to recently?*

Just the other night, I started watching *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel*. I know it came out ages ago and I'm way behind, but I am absolutely hooked. Mrs. Maisel is a character I strive to emulate in my life. She's so confident and funny, even as her life "falls apart" by the standards of that time period, the 50s. I know it's a work of fiction, but imagining the independence, bravery, and humor of the women who came before me is really inspiring. Also, all of her outfits are fantastic.

*Who are some other artists inspiring you these days?*

Two artists that I am absolutely loving are Emma Stern and Hiba Schahbaz. They're both young women making work about women, and both of them have really created a brand for themselves. Even though their work is very different, they both have a clear sense of aesthetic and storytelling that I really admire.

*Share some advice someone gave you that you've found to be true.*

I was actually recently talking to a friend about my most recent body of work, and I was worrying about the sales not being as good as I hoped, and feeling a bit disappointed, but she asked me, "if you knew things wouldn't sell, would you still have made these paintings?" I said yes, and she told me, "just keep painting then". It sounds simple, but I really needed the reminder that I don't paint to sell work, I paint because I love painting.

instagram.com/emmagracehapner

# Ethan Price

***Can you talk about any recurring themes or messages in your work?***

My work has a bit of a symbolist bent to it, but I try not to fall into that trap of being too sentimental or on the nose about it. Yet at the risk of sounding too sentimental, my work often has an eerie, elegiac quality.

I resonate a lot with, and find myself often unconsciously exploring, that sense of modern loneliness and existential longing that worked its way into so much of Edward Hopper's work.

***What's the most interesting thing you watched, read, or listened to recently?***

My girlfriend gifted me Mark Fisher's *The Weird and the Eerie*. If you're not familiar with it already: it's a collection of essays that explore the titular themes in a lot of cultural touchstones (David Lynch, Lovecraft, musical acts like The Fall). These happen to also be themes I enjoy exploring in my work (if you haven't noticed how much I've overused words like eerie and otherworldly already). Also *Godland*. It's one of my favorite films I watched in 2023.

***Who are some other artists inspiring you these days?***

I discovered Richard Cartwright recently. All of his works have this great sense of foggy atmosphere, like I'm walking into some kind of mysterious, soporific haze. I discovered the filmmaker Béla Tarr last year too. Every scene couldn't be more perfectly composed. Each scene is like an oppressive, slow-moving photograph. He somehow makes a bleak subject matter equally beautiful.

***Share some advice someone gave you that you've found to be true.***

The list of things you have to get done will never end so stop trying to speed-run through all of it.

***What is one thing you want to accomplish this next year?***

Create a large-scale piece. I tend to not go beyond the boundary of a couple of feet in the longest dimension, so I'm aiming for a more impressive scale.



ethanpriceart.com

# Finn Evans

*What is your eye drawn to lately?*

The simple beauty of everyday life. Sometimes that might mean a sublime temporary alignment of shapes, sometimes it might be a human being, sometimes it might be an infinity of sky or sea. Lately I've been drawn to expressing the essence of meditation in my work.

*Who are some other photographers inspiring you these days?*

Kenji Aoki for his iconic representation of form and tonality, Radovan Dabbagh has a beautiful way with contrast, I also really like Faizal Westcott's work on YouTube and it's cool seeing him grow and evolve as an artist, photographer and filmmaker. Also millions of others.

*What's the most interesting thing you watched, read, or listened to recently?*

The film *Reptile*, directed by Grant Singer. Probably the best cinematography and creatively shot film I've seen in years. Really inspired me to take my camera out.

*Share some advice someone gave you that you've found to be true.*

Always take your camera with you.

*How do you balance the desire to capture images purely for yourself with the pressure to keep or gain a following?*

I take photos and edit them for myself, it's a very personal process and it's all about my eye and what I think looks beautiful. In general that also applies to publishing my work. However, I do like to create smaller collections of work that respond to an interest or passion that I know other people have, because that can help to make print sales.

*What is one thing you want to accomplish this next year and one thing you want to accomplish in your lifetime?*

I want to gain more exposure for my work and publish my first photo book. I would love to transition full time to being a professional photographer one day.



instagram.com/finnevans

# Gordon Nicholas

*Share some advice someone gave you that you've found to be true.*

Slow down, shoot lots, critique later. And watch your backgrounds.

*Who are some other photographers inspiring you these days?*

Jim Goldberg and Alessandra Sanguinetti.

*What's the most interesting thing you watched, read, or listened to recently?*

Withnail and I, Orville Peck, Jim Goldberg's new book, *Coming and Going*.

*What is one thing you want to accomplish this next year?*

Finish my book dummy.

*What is one thing you hope to accomplish in your lifetime?*

Have a family.



instagram.com/gordonnicholas

# Haley Manchon

***Describe your aesthetic as an artist.***

I could maybe describe it as a kind of gentle chaos? The work has layering effects and repetition to give off a certain energy, but it's drawn delicately and with a lot of control. It parallels the concept, where the models drawn are calm and stationary, but their thoughts are cycling, buzzing in ways that can feel overwhelming.

***Share some advice someone gave you that you've found to be true.***

For my first internship during college I worked for a painter, and she always said that artists need to be tenacious. She's held true to that, and I really admire what she's been able to accomplish because of her tenacity. Now that I'm out of college, I've experienced for myself how life has a habit of getting in the way of creative work. So I think it's really important to hold onto your ambitions in whatever way is feasible.

***Who are some other artists inspiring you these days? What do you like about their work?***

James Jean has been by far my biggest inspiration in the last decade, but I'm also really into Inka Essenhigh, Sasha Gordon, and Arghavan Khosravi right now. Their work is different from each other, but they all have strong foundational skills that are used as a springboard for creating compelling narratives, characters and figurative pieces.

***What's the most interesting thing you watched, read, or listened to recently?***

*The Boy and The Heron*. I still think about those opening scenes of Mahito running through the crowd toward the fire. The animation was mesmerizing, it gave me chills and I couldn't look away.

***What is one thing you want to accomplish this next year?***

I have ideas for a new body of work that's more honest and personal than what I've done in the past. My drawings have long touched on isolation and the subconscious, but they've always danced around my personal experiences in favor of covering the general feelings associated with them. I'm excited to explore how I can express this in my work and share it with others.

instagram.com/haley_manchon

# Iris Kwon

***How has your work evolved over the years?***

I started this journey as an illustrator first, then moved into painting in 2023. This transition from digital illustrations to painting on canvas has been a transformative experience. It has refined my approach to color selection and composition, encouraging a more thoughtful consideration of space.

Working on a larger canvas, as opposed to the confines of a screen, has broadened my perspective and deepened my appreciation for the physical medium.

***Can you talk about recurring themes or messages in your work?***

My paintings often revolve around a central theme: Reconnecting with my childhood self. My art depicts all those dreams, nightmares, and the memories that shaped me in my early years. This journey back to the simplicity and wonder of childhood continuously fuels and inspires my artistic exploration. It's a way for me to remain grounded and true to my roots, while I translate these cherished moments and memories into art.

***What's the most interesting thing you watched, read, or listened to recently?***

Watched the movie *A Goofy Movie* as an adult, and realized it hits you differently.

***Who are some other artists inspiring you these days?***

Been obsessed with David Jien's work. His details and intricate color combination in his drawing is amazing.

***Share some advice someone gave you that you've found to be true.***

Not everyone has a distinct passion; so if you have one, you are lucky so follow it.

***What is one thing you want to accomplish this next year?***

I want to get out of my comfort zone, and try a new medium.



instagram.com/child_appetite

# Jamil Nasim

*How has your work evolved over the years?*

The evolution of my work has been informed by my multidisciplinary practice. I came up making sample based hip-hop music which eventually led me to discover Jamaican Dub music and sound system culture. The core of these music cultures is the manipulation of pre-existing recorded music to create something completely new. You often build in layers; Taking the drums from this, the melody from that, etc. These sounds are then manipulated through signal processing and audio effects. This informs my painting practice because it allows me to think in layers. How does this underpainting tonality relate to the main layer of paint and how do those layers relate to the following glazing passes.

I am also formally trained in screenwriting and storyboarding for film. This informs my approach in using static images to convey a broader narrative. Currently I am working on a screenplay that will accompany my next solo show. My hope is that viewers of the show will be encouraged to interact with the written work and the paintings in a symbiotic way, directing the film with their imagination.

*Are there any recurring themes or messages in your work?*

I find the main recurring theme in my work to be the Black Mundane. Black people in ordinary situations. Eating dinner, playing dominoes on the porch, getting ready to go to church, a mother braiding her daughter's hair: These moments are the foundation of my practice.

There has been a major push in the art world and other visual media for Blackness to exist between two polarities: Excellence and Trauma. What does that do to a Black person's psyche? I want my work to push back against that. I often utilize abstraction or magical realism to underpin the mundane with an otherworldly element, a visual analog to the intangible qualities of Blackness.

*What is one thing you want to accomplish this next year?*

I hope to develop a representational relationship with an international gallery and have a debut international solo exhibition.

# Jason McCrea

*How has your work evolved over the years?*

I have been in a years long experimental phase. From graffiti, to gouache, to canvas paintings. Just trying to make it all make sense.

*Are there any recurring themes or messages in your work?*

There is a theme of broken communication in some of my work that I'm enjoying. I'm fascinated by the arts as an earthier form of communication than words. How difficult it is for humans to understand each other, everything that gets lost in misunderstandings, and painting being a saviour for truth and intention.

*Who are some other artists inspiring you these days? What do you like about their work?*

People doing painterly muralism these days like Alba Fabre Sacristán, Elisa Capdevila, Pat Perry, Bryan Beyung, etc.

I love the qualities of a small loose painting but on a wall. I find it real and raw, romantic, expressive, hits you in the heart.

Also, I feel like these types of works will age well in their urban environments. They are classic and have longevity.

*Share some advice someone gave you that you've found to be true.*

"Whatever your hands find to do, do it with all your might..." My grandma taught me this.

*How do you balance the desire to create images purely for yourself with the pressure to keep or gain a following?*

The illusive magic of what gains a following and what doesn't is out of my grasp. That's a dangerous thing to try and chase. When I create its purely for me. If it resonates with people it is a surprise and a gift.

*What is one thing you hope to accomplish in your lifetime?*

I have always wanted to build my own house from start to finish. Also to be painting well into my 90's like Alex Katz.

instagram.com/jsiloh

# Javier E. Piñero

***Complete this sentence: For me, photography is...***

In humble hands, for me, photography is the most transparent communication tool.

***Can you share the most unusual or unexpected thing that has happened to you while shooting photos?***

I used to go on long photo walks alone around the city, and coming from an island (Puerto Rico), New York tends to be overwhelming, and sometimes the lack of nature brings you down. This one day, I ended up in a park in the Lower East Side, and I sat down on a bench to think, and a bunch of butterflies just laid on my head and shoulders. It felt like the world was reassuring me that everything would be ok.

***Who are some other photographers inspiring you these days? What do you like about their work?***

I've been really inspired by Francesca Woodman's work. Francesca Woodman always sought to conjure a mystical atmosphere and create a visual poetic epic that allowed her to make sense of the human condition. Concepts such as life, death, loss, and change are ever-present in her photographs. She frequently cast herself as the central character in her works, a choice she described as "pure convenience." Nevertheless, I cannot help but discern the implication of self-exploration as her mind raced to find itself amidst the silver halides.

***Share some advice someone gave you that you've found to be true.***

Remember that no one knows your work better than yourself. Stick to what feels true to you.

***What's the most interesting thing you watched, read, or listened to recently?***

*Poor Things* was just amazing and a boost in creativity.

***What is one thing you want to accomplish this next year?***

I want to be able to sustain myself economically solely from my art.



instagram.com/javiere.pinero

# Jessie Mahon

*Describe your aesthetic as an artist.*

My aesthetic lives somewhere between memory, reality, and imagination. My drawings are soft and delicate but also pretty intense and vivid, the contrast resulting in pieces that feel dreamlike.

*How has your work evolved over the years?*

I like to think I'm exploring iterations on the same ideas, just with more specificity and curiosity and less self-consciousness. I switched from painting with acrylic to drawing with colored pencils a few years ago and felt an immediate correctness I'd never experienced with painting.

*Can you talk about recurring themes or messages in your work?*

An evolving depiction of 'self' is what I'm most interested in exploring at the moment. All of the figures in my drawings are anonymous, which I think allows viewers to relate and possibly see themselves in the work, engaging with details of human complexity which observation alone can't fully capture.

*How do you balance the desire to create images purely for yourself with the pressure to keep or gain a following?*

This is likely the optimist in me ignoring the reality of the shifting algorithm, but my hope is if I just keep making and sharing my work (the vast majority of which includes drawings I create for myself), the people who are into it will find me. I also take a lot of breaks from the internet and trust that no one really cares about, or keeps tabs on, my absence. Posting and sharing feels best for me when it's playful and I don't take it too seriously.



*What's the most interesting thing you watched, read, or listened to recently?*

I recently read *Yellowface* by R.F. Kuang and couldn't put it down. It was gripping and sharp and funny and just wholly horrific.

*Share some advice someone gave you that you've found to be true.*

No one really knows what they're doing.

instagram.com/jessiemahon

# Jiannan Wu

*Are there any recurring themes or messages in your work?*

Through formats of sculpture and wall-mounted relief, I present the theme of contemporary urban life and social events such as politics and sports with a focus on realism and a playful, satirical and multifaceted narrative, that can make us realize the often absurd nature of the environment we're currently living in.

*How do you balance the desire to create images purely for yourself with the pressure to keep or gain a following?*

I consistently consider myself as the benchmark, and my past experiences have shown me that by prioritizing my own satisfaction, I am better able to garner appreciation for my work from others.

*What's the most interesting thing you watched, read, or listened to recently?*

"Starry Night Talk", a Chinese local emotional call-in radio show.

*Share some advice someone gave you that you've found to be true.*

Find your language, not style.

*What is one thing you hope to accomplish in your lifetime?*

Travelling to watch the World Cup final live one day.



instagram.com/jiannan_wu

# Jovian Chi Fung Cheng

*Complete this sentence: For me, photography is...*

The documentation of our own perception of the world. It is how we preserve the memories of our loved ones and the environment we grew up in. We document so that when we are old in age and our memories are fading, we can pick up old photos we took to remind ourselves of the life we have lived.

*How do you balance the desire to capture images purely for yourself with the pressure to keep or gain a following?*

Thinking back on my photography journey, I used to follow trends to appease what I thought the public wanted to see more of. I would go to the latest trendy locations and shoot the same subject as everyone else. When I realized that following trends was a never-ending chase and my photographs began to look like everyone else's, I began to pivot away and photograph what I thought was interesting. That was when I discovered an indescribable joy from photography as I was able to discover my voice and become my own storyteller.

*What's the most interesting thing you watched, read, or listened to recently?*

The most interesting thing I have listened to recently is a six-album project composed by Leyland Kirby under the moniker of The Caretaker and it is titled, "Everywhere At The End Of Time." It explores the progression of an Alzheimer's patient and the gradual degradation of their memories. It was an extremely haunting listen and gave me a sobering cold water splash realization of our fragility.

*What is one thing you want to accomplish this next year?*

I want to design and publish my first photo book. There is a project I have been working on for 2 years and all the photographs are complete. The next steps include designing the layout and printing the book. I plan to accomplish both those steps in 2024 and have it displayed in at least one art gallery or exhibition.



instagram.com/_jovian

# Juan de la Quintana

*How has your photography evolved over the years?*

In some ways, I feel that the themes I explore remain the same. Loneliness, the sense of not belonging, and the fear of the passage of time are key elements in photography. However, I believe that my approach to these subjects has evolved. My current work is more deliberate, less erratic, and more intentional. When capturing a landscape, I prefer to wait for the right moment, even returning on another day if necessary for ideal conditions. When photographing people, the most crucial aspect, for me, is getting to know them, spending time together, and listening, so that both of us feel comfortable before taking the photo, right at the end.

*Share some advice someone gave you that you've found to be true.*

It may sound cliché, but some good advice I have received is to keep trying. Sometimes, things get complicated, and it is exasperating, but you have to trust the process and the simple fact of doing things because you like them. Don't stop; don't let frustration poison what is fundamental to you. With time, everything makes sense. Just keep doing what you love.

*What is one thing you want to accomplish this next year?*

Currently, I am taking a break in my photography journey. I've been devoted to a significant project from the end of 2021 until now, and now that I sense its readiness, I aim to give it proper form. While I don't anticipate releasing it as a photobook this year, since I'm not in a hurry, my plan is to get good advice, surround myself with trustworthy people and write the story I want to tell.

*What is one thing you hope to accomplish in your lifetime?*

It's a very broad question and, in my opinion, a bit challenging to answer. I think everyone, depending on their ego to some extent, has more or less ambitious goals. In any case, and being a bit reductionist, for me, it's enough to grow old and have stories to tell. In the end, my photographs are moments from my life or other people's lives, chance encounters that enrich my experience like pieces of a chaotic puzzle that makes sense at the same time. My job is to put together that puzzle, so as long as I can keep telling my tales when I'm older, I'm good.



instagram.com/j.delaquintana

# Kate Sweeney

*Complete this sentence: For me, photography is...*

How I make sense of my feelings.

*How has your photography evolved over the years?*

It has shifted and evolved alongside my personal growth and transformation. My work is constantly reflecting back to me about where I'm at and my emotions.

*What is your eye drawn to lately?*

Right now, I'm really drawn to visuals that feel like playing make-believe as a kid.

*Share some advice someone gave you that you've found to be true.*

Create work that is personal. If you don't feel connected when making a photo, it's unlikely the viewer will feel something.

*How do you balance the desire to capture images purely for yourself with the pressure to keep or gain a following?*

It's hard! I don't know the answer but I think as long as you're making work that is important/vital to your life, the audience will sort itself out.

*What is one thing you want to accomplish this next year?*

More play, more personal work, more vulnerability in the work.

*What is one thing you hope to accomplish in your lifetime?*

To have a long, grey braid in my hair.



instagram.com/kate_sweeney

# Kayoon Anderson

*How has your work evolved over the years?*

I studied architecture before shifting my studies to portrait painting from life which was great training in observation. Since then, my focus has changed from trying to accurately represent colour and volume of flesh, to thinking more about the mood and concepts behind the paintings. Figures became pushed back in space and the settings became built out of imagination. I started integrating patterns and narrowing my colour fields – the paintings have become dreamscapes rather than representations of reality.



*Can you talk about recurring themes or messages in your work?*

I am of mixed White and Asian heritage and look to both traditional Korean art and Western medieval religious art for inspiration. Perhaps this cultural mashup of influences comes through as a recurring theme in my work. In terms of subject matter, my paintings have been exploring nostalgia for childhood as well as looking to the future and the possibility of motherhood.

*Who are some other artists inspiring you these days?*

The artworks I'm inspired by are very considered and contained. Giotto and Morandi are constant sources of inspiration for their sturdy compositions and meditative nature. Park Su Geun's groundedness and Njideka Akunyili Crosby's clean, playful compositions are things I always look to on my studio wall. Recently I've been blown away by the work of Christian Hidaka – I see something of me as a person in his works.

*Share some advice someone gave you that you've found to be true.*

In my first year of painting, I mentioned to a tutor how eager I was to find my 'style' – they replied that that isn't a mindset I should ever have, and I should trust that the pieces I produce will be coherent because they all have something of me in them. Nowadays I actively remind myself to be free to experiment with aesthetic and that I should always be challenging myself to develop and become different, become better, instead of sticking to a 'style'.

instagram.com/kayoon_anderson

# Kirk Gower

*How has your work evolved over the years?*

Over time I have become braver as an artist, allowing myself to experiment with the materiality of paint and giving myself the space to be vulnerable with the subject matter I investigate through my paintings.

*Can you talk about recurring themes or messages in your work?*

I use my paintings to communicate what I find difficult to otherwise say. Working through complex feelings often exploring markers of identity. I also like to explore the materiality of paint in my work and find it intriguing how various artistic techniques can elicit diverse responses from viewers. Oil paint has the power to push and pull the viewer and sometimes I try to do both at times, creating a tension in the work.

*Who are some other artists inspiring you these days? What do you like about their work?*

Hannah Gluckstein, aka Gluck, was a queer portrait painter who was ahead of her time, and I'm endlessly inspired by her compositions, specifically her painting "Medallion (YouWe)".

Félix González-Torres' work was vulnerable, personal, and raw. I draw endless inspiration for the way he depicted his love for his partner, specifically in his work "Untitled (Perfect lovers)".

*Share some advice someone gave you that you've found to be true.*

You can't break the rules if you don't know them. There is an academic, technical side to painting and every artist should spend the time learning these techniques so they eventually can manipulate and turn them on their head.

*What is one thing you want to accomplish this next year?*

I spent the majority of last year creating a new body of work, my goal and focus was to be in the studio and not get distracted by all the other stuff artists must do like promote, submission applications, etc. This year I want to exhibit this work, allowing space for people to interact with my work in person.



instagram.com/kirk.f.gower

# Kristina Barker

***How has your photography evolved over the years?***

I've had to accept the fact that I might not be much of a documentary photographer anymore. And I feel like part of that evolution is learning to not cling so much to the labels we like to put on ourselves.

***Who are some other photographers inspiring you these days? What do you like about their work?***

The joy of daily Ozark life that Terra Fondriest shares is always dreamy and captivating. Tailyr Irvine's images, especially around her home and of family in Montana are tender and beautiful. Hannah Yoon's thoughtful and telling photographs always bring me a welcome pause.

***Share some advice someone gave you that you've found to be true.***

Just do your thing. When I lean into my heart and apply that to my art practice, that's when I make work that best reflects whatever story it is that I'm trying to help communicate. And when editors or clients tell me to just do my thing, I listen.

***Can you share the most unusual or unexpected thing that has happened to you while shooting photos?***

Definitely getting sprayed with urine by a white Bengal tiger—in Rapid City, South Dakota of all places.

***How do you balance the desire to capture images purely for yourself with the pressure to keep or gain a following?***

I don't have a desire to gain or keep a following. I feel like people either connect with art or they don't. That's the beauty in it being subjective. Let's all embrace the ego death like the mushrooms do.

***What's the most interesting thing you watched, read, or listened to recently?***

*Girlhood* by Melissa Febos.

***What is one thing you want to accomplish this next year?***

Survive it.

instagram.com/kristinabarker

# Laney Lai

*How has your work evolved over the years?*

I used to create more full 3D scenes that narrate stories. They either carry an emotion or convey a certain mood that I want to capture. Recently I have been exploring a more graphic, abstract approach to the visual and playing more with 2D elements.

*Can you talk about recurring themes or messages in your work?*

I have been developing a travel series where I create digital sculptures that are intergrated into photos taken during my travels. Being on the road and surrounding myself in nature inspires me the most. I wanted to remember the landscapes by leaving my own mark in a way. The sculptures are gems and seashells that I found and they wouldn't exist without the sceneries behind them.

*What's the most interesting thing you watched, read, or listened to recently?*

I just watched *Poor Things* and it's probably the most visually stunning and creative film I've seen this year.

*Who are some other artists inspiring you these days?*

Agnes Lawrence Pelton. I love her color palette and the elegant, enchanting formations in her art work. I have had the pleasure to see them in person multiple times and they always pull me in right away. They are transcendental and calming. It always feels meditative being in the presence of her work and it inspires me to convey the same energy in mine.

*Share some advice someone gave you that you've found to be true.*

Completion over perfection.

*What is one thing you want to accomplish this next year?*

Create a solid body of personal work.

*What is one thing you hope to accomplish in your lifetime?*

It's a secret because I don't want to say it out loud yet!



instagram.com/apileofmud

# Léa Mariella

*Complete this sentence: For me, photography is...*

A way to give communities excluded from social participation the ability to have their voices heard and included.

*Who are some other photographers inspiring you these days? What do you like about their work?*

I find the work of Dawoud Bey, Baldwin Lee, and Judith Joy Ross, beautiful and inspiring.



*What's the most interesting thing you watched, read, or listened to recently?*

"Whenever the need for some pretence of communication arises, those who profit from our oppression call upon us to share our knowledge with them." Audre Lorde, *Your Silence Will Not Protect You*.

*What is one thing you want to accomplish this next year?*

Undertaking research in social work co-creating with parents with learning disabilities using photo voice.

*What is one thing you hope to accomplish in your lifetime?*

Be at peace.

instagram.com/lea.c.mariella

# Luke Osborn

*Describe your aesthetic as an artist.*

I love shape and I love color. When all else fails I always have those two things. Luckily both take me pretty far and if I follow them far enough I'll always learn something. It's a pretty great formula.

*Are there any recurring themes or messages in your work?*

I've learned that much of my work focuses on how things can fit together in the world. Taking two disparate ideas and painting them together shows me that there's actually a current that connects all things. I believe that's one of the great capabilities of painting. To find these currents and describe them. The images produced remind the viewer these currents exist. In this way, painting has made me much more of an optimist.

*How do you balance the desire to create images purely for yourself with the pressure to keep or gain a following?*

I try really hard to ignore the latter half of the question.

*Share some advice someone gave you that you've found to be true.*

I recently saw a talk by Katherine Murphy. She said to never go back to the studio after dinner. I've found that advice to be helpful.

*What is one thing you want to accomplish this next year?*

I have an annoying amount of ideas for new paintings. I'd like to make them all. Then, inevitably, I won't like them very much and I'll revert back to my "shapes and colors formula" until I find something that rings true for whatever reason. I'd also like to take more walks.



instagram.com/7ukeosborn

# Nate Burbeck

*How has your work evolved over the years?*

The paintings have gotten more detailed over time in terms of my execution, and thus the canvas sizes have gotten smaller, generally speaking. In terms of subject matter I think my work has become more reflective and personal, or at least I've become more acutely aware of the allegorical connections between the imagery of a given painting and events, emotions or memories of my lived experience. Sometimes that connection is deliberate on my part when I'm constructing an image, and other times it's something I only notice in retrospect while I'm making the work or after it's finished.



*Can you talk about recurring themes or messages in your work?*

The imagery of my paintings all come from reflections of my past experiences, things that resonate with me given my peculiar family background, along with portions of the wider American/Midwestern culture I grew up in. It's also reflective of the places I live in and around that I choose to photograph, since my process involves taking on-site reference photographs of landscapes, or whatever the setting of a given painting may be.

The themes are broadly things like isolation, longing, wonder and loss, along with a sense of place. It's my attempt to create visual equivalents for inchoate feelings through the mechanism of painting.

*Who are some other artists inspiring you these days?*

David Kowalski (based in Dortmund, Germany) is always a favorite of mine. His paintings are small and subtle but endlessly alluring and contemplative.

Leonard Koscianski (Annapolis, Maryland) has been an inspiration too. There's a kind of over-the-top illustrative quality to his work that feels intentional but not overdone. It's nostalgic to my eye, reminds me of being at a Scholastic Book Fair, but it's also surreal and cryptic in a way that I love.

Emily Somoskey (Wall Walla, Washington) is another great painter. She makes these amazing, tangled canvas collages of texture and color that border representation and abstraction in a way that's admirable and just fun to look at. They're generally fairly large canvases too so it's easy to get lost in them.

nateburbeck.com

# Natia Ser

*What is your eye drawn to lately?*

I've been drawn to moments and things that give me peace and discomfort—sometimes simultaneously. How the sun seeps through the blinds to enter my room at a certain hour of the day, how a bubble sits on the river surface before it inevitably bursts, how snow becomes muddy from the many boots that run over it, how a dead pigeon lies on the ground of a bustling Chicago street...

*What's the most interesting thing you watched, read, or listened to recently?*

I recently got together with my secondary school friends for the first time in a while. We are now scattered across the world but happened to be back home in Hong Kong for the holidays. I watched them laugh their heads off when recalling the things that happened in our teenage years and thought, these are the same faces I captured extensively with the precious Nikon FM2 I borrowed from my art teacher back then.

Capturing moments I shared with my friends at school—traces of teenagehood—was how my analog photography journey began.

*Share some advice someone gave you that you've found to be true.*

To know when not to photograph and simply enjoy the moment as it is. Especially as photographers we might feel inclined to capture everything that catches our eye. Even when we're not holding a device actively seeking something to photograph or pointing at something with intent, our eyes—the primitive camera—are wired to be on the lookout. But photography is just a part of life, and in life it is basking in the light of the present that truly matters. Like many others, I have made multiple attempts to capture sunsets only to render images that failed miserably at embodying the vast beauty my eye beheld. Perhaps some moments are meant to be felt—not captured. Sometimes, the days that wash over me are the days that I leave my camera at home.

Also, have the capacity to be embarrassed. Cultivate the courage to be vulnerable. Make lots of mistakes. Don't approach your next photograph thinking it'll end up at MoMA. Just keep working. If you feel stuck, take a few days away from your work, come back to it, and look at it from a new perspective.



instagram.com/arkaaive

# Olivia Di Gregorio

***How has your work evolved over the years?***

I consistently painted love letters to art history through collaborations with my models; yet, now the subject matter has grown into more reflective stories, using collage as an element of the ideation process to bring my own realities into these imagined spaces.

I'm increasingly interested in weaving in contemporary notions and sincerity into the glowing light of the old masters, creating a drama in the dreamscape.



***Who are some other artists inspiring you these days? What do you like about their work?***

I'm constantly fed by old masters like Thomas Lawrence, Sargent, and everyone from the Pre-Raphealite movement, but after visiting South Korea in 2023, I've been in absolute awe of Park InJu's work. Their images explode with sincerity, and their rendering of fire is so highly satisfying; it feels like it truly responds to the environment on a chemical level, burning a mirage into the retina.

***What's the most interesting thing you watched, read, or listened to recently?***

Easily *Lesser Known Monsters of the 21st Century* by Kim Fu. I brought this book everywhere I went, revisiting chapters to re-experience the short stories in my head. It ventures into topics similar to 'Black Mirror', but touches on ideas that feel mythological, and surreal. I deeply loved this book.

***What is one thing you hope to accomplish in your lifetime?***

This is a hard question, because, as an artist, I feel like goals should always be evolving. Currently, a large desire of mine is to collaborate more with galleries, and larger institutions to create a deeper environment, and more engaging experiences for the viewer within the world I'm building. I'm thinking about places that can house the work and these dreamscapes with enough space, and transform them into living objects that cannot only be viewed, but shared and walked through.

instagram.com/oliviadigregorio

# Peter Gabriel Gehrman

*Are there any recurring themes or messages in your work?*

A lot of the work I've done for magazines has been on the themes of nature, psychology, and identity. I would say that those themes have then informed the personal work I do, but those were already in my illustrations to begin with. Nature and a sense of loss is very present in my work.

*Who are some other artists inspiring you these days? What do you like about their work?*

María Medem is an artist who really inspired me when I first started to illustrate and she still does. I like the playfulness and at the same time stillness of her world. A later discovery is David de las Heras. They are both talented in many ways, but I think their use of color is something that really catches my eye every time.

*What's the most interesting thing you watched, read, or listened to recently?*

I'm really good at starting books and not finishing them. Right now I'm halfway through *The Vaster Wilds* by Lauren Groff and also *The Wall* by Marlen Haushofer - I really like both of them very much, so hopefully I read them to the end.

*Share some advice someone gave you.*

The big choices you might stand in front of in your life will probably not be so big in hindsight. Many choices can lead to the same path in the end. I made this big choice earlier in my life where I decided to not pursue a career in illustration. I instead studied to become an interior architect, but one pandemic later and here I am - illustrating.



*What is one thing you want to accomplish this next year?*

To find a better balance when it comes to my finances. To find a better foundation in my work as an illustrator where I can feel safe and not be worried about my economy too much.

*What is one thing you hope to accomplish in your lifetime?*

To give something to this world, something that might make someone smile, whether that be a year from now or hundreds of years.

# Peter Maciocha

*How has your photography evolved?*

I am more aware of what I want to photograph. I realized that it can be a powerful self-expression tool and a powerful way of using subconsciousness to capture reality.

*Describe your aesthetic.*

Oneiric Reality. I mostly capture the feelings I have while dreaming.

*Can you share the most unusual or unexpected thing that has happened to you while shooting photos?*

A couple of years ago, I traveled solo to Norway. It was a tough time for me as my sister had brain tumor surgery a few months earlier. I needed time to check with myself and adjust. After a few weeks, my travels led me to a glacier hidden somewhere between Fjords. When I hiked to the place, I realized I was there alone. The scenery, light, and all the weight I carried with me made me burst into tears. It is hard to describe, but that very moment felt profound. Divine. It changed my life and changed me. I left for this trip because of photography, and it was photography that led me to experience that one special moment.

*Who are some other photographers inspiring you these days?*

I have a lot of influences from all mediums, but I really like the works of Raymond Meeks. I love how he is able to capture simple things with such beauty and poetry. I'd love one day to be able to express feelings through photos as he does.

*What's the most interesting thing you watched, read, or listened to recently?*

Lately, I've been listening a lot to Visible Cloax. I like how minimal and rich their compositions are.

*Share some advice someone gave you that you've found to be true.*

You can be anything, but not all.

*What is one thing you hope to accomplish in your lifetime?*

It's hard to choose one thing. If I must choose one, I want my life to be meaningful to others. I'd love to inspire someone to become an artist.



instagram.com/subrealms

# Ryan Struck

*Can you share the most unusual or unexpected thing that has happened to you while shooting photos?*

2/15/2020. I spent the morning in Northern California on the beach. I met a spider, photographed it, and sat on a log. After spending some time simply breathing, I walked up to the car park, got in the van and left.

Sometime later, maybe 10 minutes maybe 30, I couldn't quite remember, I was driving down a winding road. As I looked left and saw the sun bleached wooden barn home, I knew immediately what was about to happen. I straightened my gaze and gasped. That tree line along the right side of the road. My eyes welled, but I kept them from pouring "Holy shit!" I said to no one. I dreamed this scene before. The experience I was living and seeing and feeling, I had already seen. I'd never ever physically been within hundreds of miles from here.

I looked for a place to pull over. The longer I tried to hold onto the experience that just occurred, the more it slipped away. I lost it ever so slightly with each passing moment. It's as if I was only privy to that one quick slice. I knew if I didn't write this down, I wouldn't believe it when I thought of it again in the future.

*How do you balance the desire to capture images purely for yourself with the pressure to keep or gain a following?*

If you're only showing what you think people want to see, you're not bringing your imagination to light.

I am in love with the process. I spend time alone, I hear my own thoughts. I allow nature to reflect them. I experiment a lot, and I show what I love.

The older I get the less I care about what anyone will think. It's a freedom that doesn't run out of taste.



*What is your eye drawn to lately?*

My work is making photos of nature, but is just as much about reflectively discovering, capturing, and depicting the human experience of sight, cognition, and perception.

*What is one thing you hope to accomplish in your lifetime?*

To become a father and show my family the beautiful experience of nature.

instagram.com/ryanstruck

# Ryan Voigt

*Complete this sentence: For me, photography is...*

My way of expressing myself creatively, exploring my own emotions and desires, and an intimate way to connect to people and the world around me.

*How has your photography evolved over the years?*

Initially, I was very drawn to documentary and street photography. Narrative was very important to me, and documentation was the major objective. Lately I've become more interested in fiction and surrealism as well as visual language in image making.



*How would you describe your aesthetic now?*

I am drawn to images that evoke a feeling, or response in some way, rather than something that is perfect technically. This can take many forms, but most often I'm drawn to images of people in some way, and this comes through in my image making as well. If an image can really force me to ask questions and I come back to it again and again, that's interesting to me.

*Who are some other photographers inspiring you these days?*

Nick Waplington for his way of making visual sense of chaos. Campbell Addy for the elegant and striking images that straddle fashion and fine art. Roe Ethridge for his humour and playful conversation on culture. Carlijn Jacobs for her images of surreal beauty.

*How do you balance the desire to capture images purely for yourself with the pressure to keep or gain a following?*

This is a constant struggle. As someone who is actively working, and looking to progress in the industry, my focus does not lie solely in fine art photography and I do have to be conscious of how my image making will translate into my portfolio. Often times I do make images for myself that don't ever get shown, and this kind of work can be really rewarding even if it might not be as marketable. Finding a balance between the two is a daily effort.

*What's the most interesting thing you watched, read, or listened to recently?*

*A Perfect Sentence* by Oliver Chanarin.

ryanvoigt.com

# Sasha Krautman

*How has your work evolved over the years?*

I have always been fascinated by people, especially faces. That's where my art journey started — I was drawing tons of portraits while practicing and developing my style. It then evolved into drawing human figures as imaginary characters in the narratives I wanted to create in my art pieces.

A few years in I discovered my love for drawing natural textures, especially wood, so I then started to combine the two favourite themes — figurative work and abstract patterns.

*What's the most interesting thing you watched, read, or listened to recently?*

Since I've been preparing to become a mother, I read a couple of books on pregnancy, childbirth and the significance of the physical and energetic connection between the mother and the baby, that is often overlooked in the modern world, where so much attention is concentrated on science and medicine. I'm sure going through that experience will transform the way I see and make art in the future.

*Who are some other artists inspiring you these days?*

I've been following the work of Martine Johanna for many years, I think she's an amazing visual storyteller and her style of painting amazes me with each new piece. I've recently discovered Aiko Robinson with her sensual pieces and Japanese print style technique of drawing/painting. I like abstract work by Matt Bromhead.

*Share some advice that you've found to be true.*

I've read and heard many times these words from Jerry Saltz: "Stay up late every night with other artists around your age. Show up." I'm actually an early bird, so I didn't take his advice literally, but connecting with other artists and the community has truly changed my journey and made me feel less alone on this path.

*What is one thing you hope to accomplish in your lifetime?*

Stay true to my calling as much as I can and serve people with art.



instagram.com/sashakrautman

# Sheida Shekarian

*Can you talk about recurring themes or messages in your work?*

All of my memories have within them, both in the foreground and background, the presence of friends, family, colleagues and even strangers. There isn't a single feeling or experience I've had that doesn't somehow bear the imprint of other people. When I look back at my work, I realize what I'm attempting to recreate is the warmth and familiarity of those shared moments. When I was protesting in Iran, what I remember vividly is the woman who shielded me from the brutality of the military. When I was cry laughing, I remember looking at my friend whose facial expression started it. When I was feeling deeply depressed and lonely, I remember finding solace in the words of strangers. Consequently, in nearly all my illustrations, interactions and narratives unfold among the characters, reflecting the collaborative tapestry of my experiences. This interpersonal dynamic inherently shapes the themes within my work.

*Who are some other artists inspiring you these days? What do you like about their work?*

I've recently been drawing a lot of inspiration from animators such as Jocelyn Charles, Arthur Sevestre, and Lee Jonghoon. Lee's work evokes a sense of nostalgia, resonating with the warmth of cherished memories from my past. His work encapsulates a time that, though irreplaceable, is tenderly missed. Jocelyn and Arthur are both incredible storytellers, a quality that particularly captivates me as an artist drawn to narrative work. Arthur's use of repetition to create a composition is something I haven't come across before. Jocelyn's animations have the coolest concepts, with bold colours and imaginative character designs that really draw me in.

*What is one thing you hope to accomplish in your lifetime?*

A deeper connection to myself. This past year I realized how disconnected I am from myself, that I've lost the ability to trust my own thoughts or intuition regarding a lot of things. Much of my perspective on life, God, my identity and the identity of others has been shaped by external influences and conditioning. I'd like to rediscover who I am and to understand my thoughts from a place of deeper consciousness. The best gift I can give to myself and others is the work I do on myself.



instagram.com/sheidashekarian

# Wenjing Yang

*Are there any recurring themes or messages in your work?*

My body of work encompasses a myriad of themes and messages; however, my overarching intention has consistently been to convey the notion of 'complexity.' Life events are intricate, emotions are nuanced, the concept of home is intricate, and society itself is a complex entity. I, as an individual, am also layered and intricate. I am drawn to the interplay of complementary colors and the elevation of ordinary objects to extraordinary status. Regardless of the thematic essence I aim to articulate, the delicate balance and tension of these contradictions are intentionally interwoven into my creations. I aspire to captivate individuals who, like myself, appreciate and embrace complexity.

*What's the most interesting thing you watched, read, or listened to recently?*

In a recent Mandarin podcast, Stochastic Volatility, the episode centered around the guest and delved into a personal journey following their mother's battle with cancer. The conversation unfolded to explore the societal emphasis on discourse structures in science and politics, juxtaposed with the subtle framing of discourse surrounding love. The discussion touched cation of self-worth and societal value within intimate relationships, where commodity attributes take precedence. The guest questioned these phenomena, asserting that our expressions of love and desires deserve acknowledgment. They highlighted the limitations of language frameworks rooted in power dynamics, underscoring their inability to fully elucidate the complexities of love and desire.

*Share some advice someone gave you that you've found to be true.*

I have come to appreciate the wisdom in the advice "approach endeavors with passion, but without expectations." Initially, I found it challenging to reconcile the notion of being passionate while simultaneously relinquishing expectations. However, recent experiences have revealed to me the possibility of gradually embodying this philosophy. At times, external expectations have the potential to overshadow or diminish my enthusiasm, but I have learned to progressively let go and conscientiously observe my responses to positive feedback, thereby amplifying my passion.



instagram.com/wenjing_art

# Wenqing Zhai

*Describe your aesthetic as an artist.*

My work uses allegorical representations to reveal human folly, the absurdity of modern society, and the underlying meaninglessness of seemingly serious pursuits. With a choice of vibrant colors reminiscent of children's drawings, my paintings create an appearance of innocence at first glance. The juxtaposition of these objects then provokes the viewer's thoughts, inviting them to contemplate the underlying messages within the image before them.



*How has your work evolved over the years?*

Over the years, my art has navigated a dynamic balance between complexity and simplicity. Reflecting on my earlier pieces, I observe an interesting pattern: Whenever my creations becomes overly chaotic, a trend towards simplification would emerge. Conversely, when they reach a point of simplicity, elements of chaos gradually reintroduce themselves again.

*Share some advice someone gave you that you've found to be true.*

Don't be scared of making bad pieces.

*How do you balance the desire to create images purely for yourself with the pressure to keep or gain a following?*

None of my works are made only for myself because of the provocative nature of my visual expression. While I aim to interact with my audience, my focus isn't on attracting or retaining followers. To me, the notion of maintaining a follower base is neither beneficial nor essential, as an artist should not fear unpopularity. However, I do take care to ensure that the sensitivity of my work does not cause offense or harm, particularly to individuals who have experienced trauma, live with disabilities, or are part of vulnerable groups.

*Who are some other artists inspiring you these days?*

I am currently obsessed with Trey Abdella's new collection of work. He recently had a solo show in TriBeCa, New York. The works were remarkable for Trey's use of diverse mediums and creative concepts with a sense of dark humor. His continual evolution towards innovative artistic methods is a key reason I admire his ethos.

instagram.com/wenqing_zhai

# Will Pippin

***Complete this sentence: For me, photography is...***

For me, photography is how I interact with the world.

***How has your photography evolved over the years?***

I've noticed that my photography has changed as my interests change. Although I might evolve from one color scheme or style, all of my work is rooted in a deep curiosity for the subject.

***Who are some other photographers inspiring you these days? What do you like about their work?***

Patricia Voulgaris has inspired me for years. Her work and approach to photography has always been refreshing.

***How do you balance the desire to capture images purely for yourself with the pressure to keep or gain a following?***

I mostly shoot what interests me and if that interests other people as well, that's cool.

***What's the most interesting thing you watched, read, or listened to recently?***

The movie, *Man Bites Dog*, and the book, *Essays and Fictions,* by Brad Phillips.



***What is one thing you hope to accomplish in your lifetime?***

Own a small flock of sheep.

instagram.com/will_pippin

# Yadi Liu

*How has your work evolved over the years?*

In recent years, I have garnered attention from influential clients and gradually begun collaborating with some of my dream brands. I've come to better understand how to integrate my artistic voice with commercial projects. Each step has propelled me along the artistic path I always envisioned, for which I am immensely grateful.

*Are there any recurring themes or messages in your work?*

Intimacy is a recurring and emphasized theme in my art. I believe it is an intrinsic desire in the human heart—a universal longing for genuine connections with others, acknowledgment, and companionship. True intimacy brings energy, and I aim to portray this gentle yet powerful energy through my art.

*Who are some other artists inspiring you these days? What do you like about their work?*

James Turrell, Constantin Brâncuși, and Edvard Munch have been significant inspirations lately. I admire their use of color and ability to simplify objects. Their works reveal the unknown essence, changes, and movements of external things.

*What is the most interesting thing you've watched, listened to, or read, recently?*

Recently, I read a book that mentioned a wrapping around nerves known as myelin. It grows with each practice aimed at improvement, eventually leading to the maturation of one's skills. This understanding provides solace, especially during phases of creative stagnation, as the ongoing growth of myelin instills a sense of hope within me.

*Share some advice someone gave you that you've found to be true.*

There is always something to learn from everyone and everything. I've discovered that adopting this mindset is advantageous in every circumstance. Embracing differences enables me to gain insights and qualities from others, even in challenging situations.



instagram.com/yadiiart

# Yujia Liu

*Describe your aesthetic as an artist.*

I view art as a reflection of the information absorbed from the past, present, and even the future, aiming to visually represent the myriad tangible and intangible aspects of our world.

*How has your work evolved over the years?*

During my finance studies, I enjoyed photography and drawing as hobbies. In my travel journal, I started creating watercolor visual stories inspired by my trips. As I added a major in visual art and art history, more traditional techniques and knowledge merged with my skills, expanding my imagination while staying rooted in the familiar.

The significant transformation happened in my graduate studies at UAL. Through enhanced research and experimentation, I was able to combine traditional materials with digital tools. Now, my creations go beyond the tangible, blending nature and science, reality and fantasy. A love for science fiction drives my inspiration, helping me explore the hidden and express my unique take on the unseen world.

*Are there any recurring themes or messages in your work?*

Nature and Science fiction form the core themes in my art. As I delve into trips, documentaries, and books, the vastness of knowledge reveals the expanses of the unknown. I aim to evoke a sense of fantasy in my creations.

*What's the most interesting thing you watched, read, or listened to recently?*

I've been reading *Luminous* by Greg Egan several times. It talks about far-side mathematics and the idea of another world, which is super interesting. The story suggests there's a boundary between our world and another, affecting how both sides work.

*What is one thing you hope to accomplish in your lifetime?*

I aspire to bring the realm of the invisible spiral world to life through my art. Despite diverse experiences shared by many, its explanation is still beyond scientific grasp. I dream that one day, if the boundary of the physical world proves porous, I can visualize and capture its mysteries in my illustrations.



instagram.com/yujia.liu.jo

# Zhenyi Zheng

*Describe your aesthetic as an artist.*

I like to capture life details from unspoken objects, spaces and movements that are often ignored or unnoticed. Combining minimalist compositions and cinematic scenes, my drawings exist in a place between reality and fiction, conveying a dreamy quality mixed with an objective tone and sober perspective. My drawing is influenced from sequential art and take advantage of films and photography, and realised in flickering lines and soft colour.



*Are there any recurring themes or messages in your work?*

Nature, cityscapes and interiors are some recurring motifs in my work.

*How has your work evolved over the years?*

After graduating from Royal College of Art, I started to take on illustration works as a freelancer. In recent years, I've been working on different stuff: Comics, editorial illustration, picture books, visual design, motion graphics, and self-publication. I enjoy practicing across different projects.

Usually, I'd like to draw inspiration from films and photography. In parallel with drawings, I also record life through photography, and they always bring nutrients for my drawings.

*How do you balance the desire to create images purely for yourself with the pressure to keep or gain a following?*

Actually, for me, there is not much obsession with gaining a following. It is undeniable though that more followers means being known by more people, and possibly getting more exposure opportunities, but this will not interfere with my creative motivation and rhythm.

This is indeed an era where artists rely heavily on social media, but I personally spend more energy and time on the creation itself and do not pay attention to social media frequently. Social media is a great place for sharing, but I always keep it away from creation itself, otherwise, it is putting the cart before the horse. Gaining a following is far less than the meaning of my real life and my inner motivation of creation.

instagram.com/zhenyiii_zheng

# Zhongwen Hu

*How has your work evolved over the years?*

I studied illustration at Syracuse University for my MFA degree. I guess the narrative quality in my paintings were affected by my major. I used to paint a lot about surrealism, memories and consciousness stuff. For instance, I had a painting called "Grandma," which depicts a dream about her after she passed away. We were very, very close. In the dream, I thought she's coming back to life, but immediately I realize she's already gone. I was experiencing extremely polarized emotions at the same time. That emotion was so intense that I had to make it into a painting. After I finished, I felt so relieved. That's why I was thinking if I could heal myself, my work might be able to heal the viewers too. That is a turning point for me to focus on my way of artistic therapy.

*Are there any recurring themes or messages in your work?*

I was inspired by an idea called "Walking meditation," that is, to discard the distractions of thought, and to embrace the unbridled sensations of objects and our surroundings. At the same time, since time does not, in some ways, exist, the past and future only exist in the mind, so the only moment that can be experienced is the present. Such a fixation on the present can help to extricate thought and judgement, a state of mind that I believe is a gateway to self-healing. Nature is such a good entry point for putting me at peace and ease, and I hope viewers have similar experiences that raised emotions can be mollified too.

*What's the most interesting thing you watched, read, or listened to recently?*

The recent movie I watched, and loved, is called *Perfect Days* by Wim Wenders. I found myself resonating a lot with the characters. The interesting thing is the main character didn't have much dialogue, but the performance was profound and sublime.

*What is one thing you want to accomplish this next year?*

Capsule Shanghai is one of my favorite galleries in Shanghai, I hope I can work with them one day.

*What about in your lifetime?*

I want to see the animal migration in Africa.

instagram.com/zhongwenhu

# Array

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